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## Preaching a Universal Gospel (10:34-43)

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### *The Speaker*

1. Who preached this sermon and why would he have not initiated preaching to Cornelius on his own? (10:28, 11:2-3)
2. Why do you think Peter was chosen to preach first to the Gentiles? After all, Paul was the Lord's *chosen instrument to carry his name before the Gentiles*. (Mt. 16:19)

<sup>9</sup>The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. <sup>10</sup>And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance <sup>11</sup>and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. <sup>12</sup>In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>13</sup>And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." <sup>14</sup>But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." <sup>15</sup>And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." <sup>16</sup>This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

<sup>17</sup>Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate <sup>18</sup>and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. <sup>19</sup>And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. <sup>20</sup>Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them." <sup>21</sup>And Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?" <sup>22</sup>And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say." <sup>23</sup>So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. <sup>24</sup>And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. <sup>25</sup>When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. <sup>26</sup>But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." <sup>27</sup>And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. <sup>28</sup>And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. <sup>29</sup>So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me." <sup>30</sup>And Cornelius said, "Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing <sup>31</sup>and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. <sup>32</sup>Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' <sup>33</sup>So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

<sup>34</sup>So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup>but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), <sup>37</sup>you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, <sup>40</sup>but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup>To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." <sup>44</sup>While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. <sup>46</sup>For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, <sup>47</sup>"Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" <sup>48</sup>And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

### *The Audience*

3. Who is in the audience (10:24)? Where are they located? How does Luke characterize Cornelius (10:1-3, 22, 33)?

*The Occasion*

4. Luke is very thorough to accurately describe the chronology of the events that join Peter with Cornelius. Describe what happens on each day.
  - a. Day 1 (10:3-8):
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Day 2 (10:9-22):
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. Day 3 (10:23):
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. Day 4 (10:24-33)

*The Message (10:34-43)*

5. What is the main point of Peter's message, according to 10:34-35? Exactly what does this statement mean in the immediate context? When does he understand this new concept?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Witherington suggests "this is the most comprehensive review of the career of Jesus found in any of the sermons in Acts". Why might this be the case given the audience to whom he is preaching to? List the events of Jesus' life as described by Peter, starting with the "word that he sent to Israel".
  - a. 10:36 –
  - b. 10:37-38 –
  - c. 10:39-41 –
  - d. 10:42-43 –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Compare and contrast this sermon to Peter's Pentecost sermon.

*The Response (10:44-11:18)*

8. What events occur while Peter is preaching? Who was amazed at these events?
  
9. Did Cornelius and his house receive the Holy Spirit before or after baptism? Why do you think these events happened in this order?
  
10. How did Cornelius and his household respond to the command given by Peter? How did the “circumcision party” initially respond to this monumental event (11:2-3)? After Peter’s explanation and eyewitness account from the six brothers (11:17-18)?